DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 378 349 CE 067 928

TITLE	Rhode Island Tech Prep Business & Industry Resource Guide.
INSTITUTION	Community Coll. of Rhode Island, Warwick.
SPONS AGENCY	Department of Education, Washington, DC.
PUB DATE	[94]
NOTE	17p.; For related documents, see CE 067 924-927.
PUB TYPE	Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Articulation (Education); Associate Degrees; Community Colleges; Corporate Support; Educational Change; *Education Work Relationship; High Schools; Integrated Curriculum; *Partnerships in Education; *Program Development; *School Business Relationship; Shared Resources and Services; *Tech Prep; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS	*Rhode Island

ABSTRACT

This guide provides educators with information about developing partnerships with businesses. It begins with a rationale for forging education-business relationships and highlights benefits to all parties--educators, businesses, and students. The Rhode Island Tech Prep Associate Degree Program is cited as an example of how to create win-win situations. The program is described, with emphasis on the role of the Community College of Rhode Island. The following section outlines ways in which businesses can contribute, including curriculum revision, mentoring programs, classroom presentations, participation in career days, and work site tours for students and educators. These ways in which businesses benefit are described: employee training, tutoring in English as a Second Language, and "workplace ready" employees. A checklist for developing a business-education partnership program that may be used as the foundation of a school-to-work transition program is provided. The next section lists keys for success of school-to-work partnerships: clear, shared vision; educators' adoption of a private sector industry perspective; recognition that much time is required; climates of negotiation and cooperation; development around a single school or school system; inclusion of employers of all sizes and types; open, honest, and frequent communication; and commitment. The final section focuses on business-education partnerships as a growing component of the Rhode Island Tech Prep Program. (YLB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 378 349

BUSINESS & INDUSTRY

RESOURCE GUIDE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

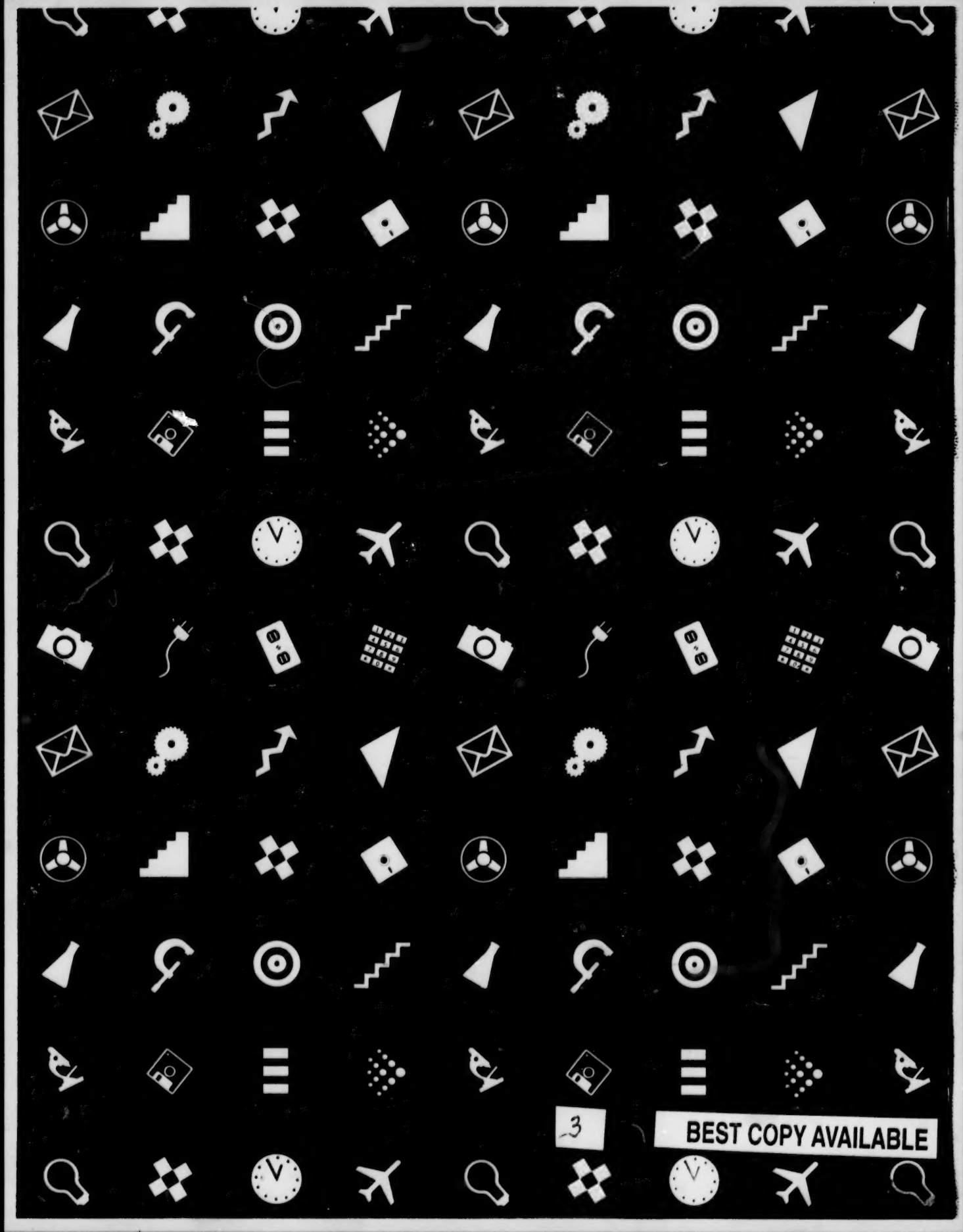
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

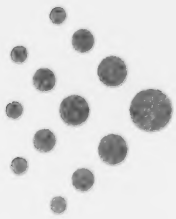
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

CE 067 978

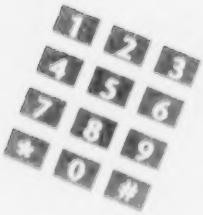
BEST COPY AVAILABLE


3
BEST COPY AVAILABLE



RHODE ISLAND
TECH
PREP

Rhode Island Tech Prep
Business & Industry Resource Guide



Community College of Rhode Island
400 East Avenue, Warwick, Rhode Island 02886 401.825.2143 TDD 401.825.2307

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Components of a Business / Education Partnership 4

How to Build Partnerships 5

Keys for Successful Partnerships 6

Tech Prep and Business Partnerships 9

TECH PREP ASSOCIATE DEGREE STAFF

Judith Marmaras
Program Director

Patricia Neri
Program Coordinator

Andrea MacQueen
Evaluation Technician

Cheryl Serra
Marketing Coordinator

PARTICIPATING TECH PREP ASSOCIATE DEGREE HIGH SCHOOLS:

Barrington High School
Bristol/Warren High School
Burrillville High School
Central High School
Central Falls High School
Chariho Regional High School
Chariho Vocational Technical Facility
Coventry High School
Cranston High School East
Cranston High School West
Cranston Vocational Technical Facility
East Greenwich High School
East Providence High School
East Providence Vocational Technical Facility
Hanley Vocational Technical Facility
Johnston High School
Narragansett High School
Newport Vocational Technical Facility
North Kingstown High School
North Providence High School
Pilgrim High School
Tiverton High School
Toll Gate High School
Warwick Veterans Memorial High School
Warwick Vocational Technical Facility
Westerly High School
West Warwick High School
Woonsocket High School
Woonsocket Vocational Technical Facility
Davies Vocational Technical Facility

The cost of doing business has increased. Nowadays, business leaders have got to do more with less. Competition from home and abroad puts an added pressure on business and industry. Today's increasingly technological, global marketplace calls for ingenuity and innovation. It calls for doing what it takes to gain the competitive edge.

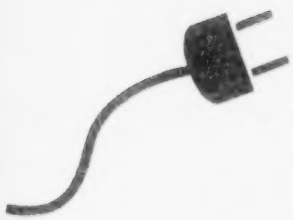
It calls for the best in all of us.

In these challenging times, an uneducated, unskilled employee is a liability businesses simply can't afford. And as an educator, you own a small part of your students' future. You hope to provide your students with the tools necessary to be successful in the technological world in which they will seek employment. And those tools have changed since the days when a strong back was all that was required to make a decent living. Employees in the 21st century must possess a host of personal, academic and occupational skills if they are to be successful. National education reports indicate that by the year 2000, approximately 70 percent of the jobs in America will not require a four-year college degree; however, three out of four job classifications will require some type of education or training beyond high school.

And so it seems only natural that the worlds of education and of work form long-lasting partnerships aimed at benefitting all involved - particularly students. Ideally, students learn and the knowledge they gain is later applied in the world of work. Educators look to business people and ask, "What is it that I can teach these students in order to make them successful employees in today's technological work environment?" Business people provide these answers and then ask educators, "How can I help you accomplish this task?" After all, business people have got a vested interest in the final outcome of these students, students who may someday be on their company payroll.

While efforts to forge more concrete and lasting relationships between these two entities have been ongoing, these efforts must be increased if we are to create a

world class work force which will help us remain competitive in today's economy. These alliances provide benefits to all "partners". Educators can feel good about the fact that they are contributing to students' success by offering them the academic foundation and specific occupational skills which are aimed at increasing their opportunity for success in the workplace. Businesses can have a stronger voice in the decision about what students ought to be taught in order to be good employees and lifelong learners. And of course, students are the final beneficiaries. While in school, they gain the type of knowledge and skills that prepare them for a number of jobs which are in demand in this high tech workplace. In essence, everybody wins.



The Rhode Island Tech Prep Associate Degree Program is aimed at creating such win-win situations. The Tech Prep Program is a partnership between the Community College of Rhode Island and approximately 70 percent of the high schools in the state. The aim of the Program is twofold: 1.) to encourage students to succeed in high school with the aim of completing the requirements of a two-year degree at the Community College of Rhode Island and 2.) to provide employers with a technically-trained pool of employees which will allow employers to remain competitive in an increasingly technological global economy.

Students are selected for the Tech Prep Program in high school and by grade 11 they enroll in courses such as Principals of Technology (physics), Mathematics for Technology (math), and Communications (English). These courses are taught in a hands-on manner and therefore allow students to see the practical applications of the knowledge they are gaining. Since the Program's inception more than seven years ago, the number of courses available to Tech Prep high school students has increased and now includes Applied Biology/Chemistry, College Accounting, College Business, Administrative Office Procedures, and Applied Workplace Readiness.

Once students successfully complete the high school portion of the Program, they are guaranteed acceptance into specific programs at the Community College. These programs prepare students for careers in technical, business administration and office administration areas. In addition, there are a limited number of slots reserved for Tech Prep students in specific allied/dental health programs at the Community College of Rhode Island.

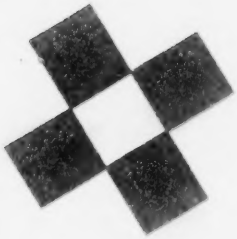
Aside from the strong academic foundation and specific occupational skills offered through the Tech Prep Program, high school Tech Prep students receive the following benefits:

- the College waives the student's application fee if the student applies to the Community College of Rhode Island
- orientations to the Community College for high school Tech Prep students
- an annual luncheon at the Community College is scheduled for Tech Prep high school seniors

- career days are held for Tech Prep high school seniors at the Community College; at this time, students may tour the College facilities and labs and speak to faculty and staff in the student's chosen area of study
- an early registration is scheduled annually for Tech Prep students and provides them the opportunity to register for classes at the Community College before other incoming freshmen. At this time, Community College faculty are available to assist students in their course selection and help to explain program requirements.
- a full-time Tech Prep Program Coordinator is available to assist students at both the high school and Community College level
- high school students are also invited to shadow Community College students at the College

All of these activities are aimed at assisting students in their academic/employment preparation as well as promoting a Program identity.

The Community College of Rhode Island also offers students meaningful educational opportunities through the Cooperative Education Program. CCRI's Cooperative Education Program provides an opportunity for students to combine their studies with career-related work experiences. Co-op students receive academic credit for working part-time or full-time in a job related to their field of study. As part of the program, students also meet once a week with faculty who help them integrate their employment and academic experiences. Cooperative Education allows students the opportunity to develop unique learning experiences, improve job readiness skills, apply knowledge gained from academic courses and the world of work, and to be paid while learning. Business benefits by being able to pre-screen potential employees who are already familiar with company procedures and practices.



The Rhode Island Tech Prep Program was cited as one of three model programs in the country by the American Association of Community Colleges. In addition, the United States Department of Education recently awarded the Community College of Rhode Island a $312,657 grant which will fund the development of a Program evaluation as well as the development and national dissemination of Tech Prep promotional materials. There is a movement underway which calls for the implementation of tech prep programs in every state in the country. Many educators from around the country have come to Rhode Island to learn about our model Program so that they may replicate it.

Components of a Business/Education Partnership

Wonderful things could happen when representatives from business and education make a concerted effort to join forces in an effort to help students to become productive employees and lifelong learners.

You may wonder how businesses can contribute to these partnerships. The answer is that businesses, no matter what their size, can contribute in a number of ways. These include:

- curriculum revision - as a member of the business community, you are well-qualified to identify the skills and knowledge required of various employment positions in your company. You may share your expertise in this area with educators by participating in a curriculum revision team. This team works to ensure that students are receiving the education they will need in particular areas of study as well as to demonstrate how this knowledge is utilized in the real world.

- mentoring programs - by participating in mentoring programs, businesses afford students the opportunity to get a firsthand look at what working at a particular job or in a particular field entails, including requisite skills.

- classroom presentations, participation in career days - business leaders can offer students a thumbnail sketch of what employment in their field is like through classroom presentations and participation in high school and/or community college career days. Students find business leaders to be credible and knowledgeable sources of information. Participation in such activities assists students with such processes as career exploration and planning.

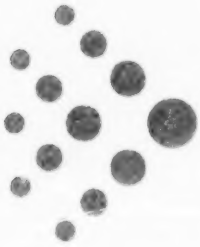
- work site tours for students and educators - the workplace can serve as a real life classroom for students and educators who wish to learn more about what occurs there. Students benefit through such activities by seeing firsthand how the knowledge they learn in the classroom has applications every day and in the world of work. Educators are provided the opportunity to see how their curriculum addresses workplace needs.

Students and educators aren't the only people who benefit from business/education partnerships. There are a myriad of ways in which businesses can profit from these alliances. These include:

- employee training - in forming a partnership with education, business representatives have access to a pool of professionals who may be able to assist in employee training for the businesses involved in the partnership.

- English as a Second Language tutoring - with the growing ethnic diversity of today's population, many employees may not speak English as their primary language. Educators may be able to assist employers by providing English as a Second Language tutoring.

- "workplace ready" employees - students who attend an educational institution which is involved in a partnership with business and who have had the opportunity to participate in some of the previously-mentioned activities will have a better understanding of what the work place requires. Students who participate in mentoring programs or internships, for instance, will be familiar with the company's task and how it is accomplished, and will therefore be a workplace ready employee. Businesses can save time and money on employee training with these students.



How to Build Partnerships

While certainly worthwhile, building partnerships between education and business is also time-consuming. There must be a commitment to the partnership and what it is aimed at achieving. The desired goals of the partnership and the responsibilities of all involved should be clearly outlined and approved by all the key players early in the development of the partnership. All involved in the partnership should focus on the end result - better prepared students - rather than on the means utilized to reach this goal. There should be constant review and revision of these partnerships once established in order to ensure that all needs are being met.

The following may be used as a handy checklist for developing a Business/Education Partnership program which may be utilized as the foundation of a School-to-Work Transition Program:

☐ Set up a committee comprised of representatives of all organizations which have a vested interest in the program. This committee will be charged with discussing and determining what the program is aimed at achieving and how these objectives will be reached. Meetings aimed at determining the parameters of the program should involve input from all stakeholders.

☐ Formalize the mission of the program by putting it in writing and having all partners sign on in agreement. This assures that partnership members all agree on program goals. The mission statement should be brief, but precise. The brainstorming that occurs while attempting to define the partnership may also lead to creative ways in which to achieve cited goals.

☐ Determine the structure of the partnership. Factors that you may wish to discuss include: membership criteria, levels of commitment required, Business/

Education Partnership committees and their tasks, and the division of duties necessary to develop, implement, and maintain the partnership. Again, written "Memos of Understanding" should be drafted and signed by participants to ensure that all involved understand their responsibilities.

☐ Write the Business/Education Partnership Plan. This plan should include the partnership's goals, targeted audiences, measurable objectives, time frames, and resource allocations. The plan will also outline the roles and responsibilities of all members as well as specific partnership activities that will occur at various phases of partnership maturity. Again, all participants in the partnership should be involved in the development of this plan and should sign the plan to indicate their commitment to it. Review and possible revision of this plan should be a regularly scheduled, ongoing effort aimed at ensuring that the partnership is achieving its goals and that the goals are consistent with workplace needs.

☐ Market the partnership. Spreading the word about the Business/Education Partnership to various target markets is very important to the partnership's success. Students, businesses and community and public service organizations may all benefit from such partnerships. These potential benefits may be outlined in promotional materials such as brochures, fliers and newsletters. Media coverage of the partnership and its activities is also an effective marketing strategy. Personal visits and presentations by people affiliated with the partnership offer targeted audiences a personal, interactive discussion about the partnership. These marketing efforts are particularly useful for recruiting partnership participants.

Keys for Successful Partnerships

The following are Keys for Success of School-to-Work partnerships as outlined in School-to-Work Connections: Formulas for Success, a 1992 publication by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration.

1.) Partners should develop a clear, shared vision of intended outcomes and should be particularly sensitive to one another's individual objectives.

Before anything happens, there must be - as a result of careful, thorough negotiation - a genuine understanding among partners regarding expected outcomes. These expectations should, in fact, be written down, formalized.

When developing these objectives, it is important that the short- and long-term needs of each participating partner be served. Programs that focus on disadvantaged youth, for example, also help schools maintain steady attendance levels, aid employers in meeting affirmative action goals, and help community service organizations achieve greater efficiencies with their always-too-limited resources.

2.) Educators should adopt a private sector industry perspective.
This is a very critical point. Evidence clearly indicates that the educational partners in most successful programs tend to develop what may be termed a "private sector perspective," that emphasizes performance. They readily accept their role as the main service-providing player on the partnership team - with responsibility for carrying out learning mandates established by the partnership. They do not assume unilateral control. They do show a readiness to deal with accountability issues and an inclination to negotiate and seek consensus when problems arise.

One important aspect of this performance perspective is a commitment to timelines. In successful programs, schools learned to show a "quick turn" responsiveness when bringing training on-line. This generally means faster decision-making and working within a more flexible calendar than is typically the case in most school systems.

3.) Partners must allow for the fact that much time is required for the formulation of stable, lasting partnerships.
Creating strong, durable partnerships inevitably requires a great deal of time. Much of this is expensive time because of the significant involvement and commitment required of upper-level managers, especially during the initial implementation phases. Moreover, continuous readjustments will be required throughout the life of the partnership in order to keep it operating efficiently. A good School-to-Work partnership may take as long as seven years to develop to maturity, with occasional up-and-down cycles along the way.

4.) Partnerships must foster climates of negotiation and cooperation.
Frequently, partnerships create independent oversight entities or seek the assistance of outside organizations to function as brokers. Such third-party players can foster a win-win intention and reduce the appearance than any one partner is serving a vested interest. Generally, the broker's role is to see that focus is held on two issues: student needs and expected outcomes. By continually emphasizing needs and outcomes, and by conducting discussions so that compromises and solutions always support the stated mission, partners inevitably broaden their motivations beyond their own self-interests.

5.) Developing the partnership around a single school or school system eases the burden of administration.
While partnerships function effectively with an array of employer participants, it is advisable to limit educational participation to a single school district or system so only one educational entity is the point of contact for all partners. It facilitates communication tremendously, and a single set of books and administrative procedures makes the one-school-system program far easier to administer than those involving multiple systems. In a case in which one partnership involves 16 school systems, just one administers and operates the program.

6.) Employers of all sizes and types should be included in School-to-Work partnerships.

Large employers are usually better able to handle the added supervisory responsibilities associated with School-to-Work programs, and generally have more on-the-job training slots to offer. Small businesses, on the other hand, often look to partnerships as a source of part-time workers. And while students might not receive as much structured training within small-employer contexts, they generally gain more varied work experiences. Smaller businesses also gain from partnership involvements by extending their influence and networks.

7.) Partnerships must foster open, honest, and frequent communication.

The most successful partnerships are characterized by candid communication at all levels, often on a daily basis, regarding all aspects of program activity and policy. New ideas are routinely encouraged. If an idea is rejected, partners are urged (expected) to rework it, indicate the difficulties with it, and offer suggestions about how it could be made useful. This behavior produces feelings of ownership, contribution and commitment within all collaborating organizations - and the inclination to speak favorably about the program and share credit for its success is reinforced.

8.) Commitment must come from the very top levels of participating organizations.

A genuine commitment to the matter of making the school experience more meaningful, more relevant and more effective for all concerned must originate from the top levels of partner organizations...and must grow both horizontally and vertically within all partner organizations if partnerships are to be truly successful. This may be the most important lesson learned from studying established programs.

In the best programs, commitment typically comes from the CEO or at least from a senior vice-president within the employer organizations, from top elected officials on the public sector side, and from the superintendent or presidents of a school system or community college. Unwavering in its pursuit of the common mission, this top-level commitment confers appropriate status and visibility upon the partnership.

But while decision-making authority rests at upper levels, the responsibility for maintaining contacts, generating support, and making operational decisions must extend vertically and then horizontally within all participating organizations as programs mature. In this way, ownership of the program and pride in the outcomes are experienced at all levels, and commitment is further extended and solidified.

Tech Prep and Business Partnerships

Business and education partnerships are a growing component of the Rhode Island Tech Prep Program. Since one of the primary goals of the Program is to provide well-educated and well-trained employees for the technological, high performance workplace that awaits them, it is extremely important that students are allowed the opportunity to see firsthand what these businesses look like from the inside and how they function. Through partnerships between business and education, students gain a better sense of what competencies will be expected of them in a particular field and what they may do to prepare for such employment. Educators benefit by being able to see firsthand what occurs in a high performance work place. They are then able to transfer this knowledge to the curriculum in order to ensure that student learning is valuable and relevant in today's workplace. And finally, businesses benefit by having access to a well-trained, technically competent pool of employees.

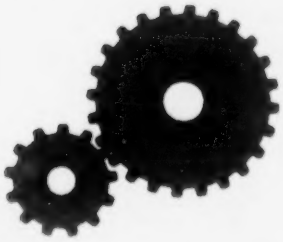
A major focus of the Tech Prep Program in Rhode Island this year has been to forge partnerships with business. To this end, we have worked closely with the Community College's Cooperative Education Program. Through Cooperative Education, students are involved in productive employment while working toward a college degree. Students work in positions related to their major field of study at the college, allowing them to observe and participate in specific employment situations. These experiences help students to learn more about a particular occupation as well as to clarify career goals.

As part of the Cooperative Education experience, students participate in a seminar that focuses on self-discovery, occupational/job analysis, communication styles and career development and are concurrently enrolled in a supervised work experience. While working, they earn competitive wages in positions related to their academic major. College faculty help them to integrate classroom learning and the world of work. Credit is awarded for successful completion of the Cooperative Work Experience and related academic requirements.

The Community College also provides Tech Prep students with job placement services upon completion of their program of study. Job placement for graduates of some technical programs is currently near 90 percent. Many Tech Prep students are recruited from the Community College before they even complete the requirements of a two-year college degree.

The Rhode Island Tech Prep Program also works closely with the Rhode Island Mathematics and Science Education Coalition (RIMSEC) and the North Kingstown Chamber of Commerce Business/Education Partnership. As a result of these alliances, the following programs have been developed:

Tech Prep Educators in Industry - This program provides an opportunity for Tech Prep educators, administrators, and guidance counselors at the secondary and postsecondary level to participate in a series of industrial experiences. Participants are invited to tour Rhode Island businesses and to participate in discussions with human resource personnel about employer expectations, skill requirements, and career opportunities. The program is expected to provide opportunities for electronic networking over Internet. Through these industrial experiences, suggestions for transferring the knowledge gained at the industrial site to the classroom will be discussed. As an offshoot of the Tech Prep Educators in Industry Tours, participants will have the opportunity to work as paid consultants to integrate industrial experiences into Tech Prep curriculum over the summer.



Tech Prep Educators in Industry complements Industrial Fellows for Teachers, a program which offers summer internships for middle and high school teachers at Rhode Island industrial and research sites. Educators are paid competitive wages in these positions and the "on-the-job" education that they receive is a valuable asset which is utilized when they return to the classroom. Not only do Industrial Fellows for Teachers participants learn the various skills which are required for positions in a high performance workplace, but the knowledge about the types of jobs available in particular industries which the educators gain is also useful in assisting students in their career decisions.

School/Business Partnerships - Several high schools in Rhode Island, with the assistance of the state Small Business Development Center, are forming partnerships with businesses in their area. These pilot partnerships are molded to meet individual needs of the businesses, schools, and students in the area; they also take into account the local industrial base. Results of these partnerships and innovative ideas that have come out of their formation will be shared during an Inservice Institute scheduled for Tech Prep instructors, administrators and counselors.

Tech Prep Career Days are held at the various campuses of CCRI and offer Tech Prep students an opportunity to see the facilities available at the Community College. This activity also allows students to speak to members of their area of academic/career interest to determine job availability, the types of skills required, and any other pertinent career information. By speaking with people who are actually employed in an area in which a student is interested in working after college, students can see how important their education is and may become more motivated to continue their education and to meet the requirements of the position in which they are interested. Much like the Tech Prep Program itself, these business/education partnerships and activities demonstrate the relevance of what they are learning and how this knowledge is applied every day and in high performance work organizations.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CCRI
Community College of Rhode Island
400 East Avenue
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886

RHODE ISLAND TECH PREP

Community College of Rhode Island does not discriminate in admissions, services or employment on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, age or handicap.

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of all information contained in this publication; however, this information is not in any manner contractually binding and may be subject to revision at any time.

Students requiring special accommodations because of a disability should contact John White, Director of Affirmative Action Programs, at (401) 455-6011.

The US Department of Education has funded the Tech Prep Demonstration project for the integration of vocational and

BEST COPY AVAILABLE